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Sova contact: Alison Kadlec, alison.kadlec@sovasolutions.org

ACUE contact: Michael Mershon, michael@thehatchergroup.com

Sova and ACUE launch guided pathways collaboration

New certificate in guided pathways implementation will strengthen faculty members' ability to ensure student learning and persistence

New York, NY and Washington, DC (September 5, 2019)—Sova and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) today announced their collaboration to strengthen the guided pathways movement. A new, jointly developed certificate in guided pathways implementation will bolster faculty engagement and co-ownership of this national reform effort. This credential and its associated training will focus on best practices that ensure student learning and persistence to completion—pillars three and four of the guided pathways model.

“To date, those serious about implementing guided pathways at scale have made significant progress on the structural challenges institutions face in the work, including mapping programs of study and redesigning advising,” said Alison Kadlec and Paul Markham, Sova’s founding partners. “But not nearly enough has been done to meet faculty where they are, speak to their interests, and bring them into this work as true partners. Our collaboration with ACUE aims to address this gap and help the guided pathways movement to have the strongest possible impact on student success.”

“It’s hard to overstate the influence of faculty on students’ career interests, choice of program, depth of learning, and determination to complete their studies,” said Penny MacCormack, ACUE’s chief academic officer. “We’re going to ensure that faculty have a rich understanding of their role in guided pathways and are equipped with evidence-based teaching approaches.”

Sova and ACUE have commenced a year-long research and design process with experts in guided pathways and with faculty and administrators from leading pathways institutions. The new certificate will be available next fall.

“One of the still-dominant characteristics of college teaching is its isolation,” said George L. Mehaffy, former Vice President for Academic Leadership and Change at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. “Social and disciplinary norms discourage faculty members from talking to one another about their teaching, and certainly from talking about their failures. So, it’s hard to create opportunities for faculty to learn from one another and to grow as professionals in the absence of feedback, new ideas, and space for experimentation. The model ACUE has developed brings together the best experts in the country to prepare high quality materials, but then faculty control the local environment. Faculty themselves co-create the learning community where they’re talking to one another and they’re using their own classes

to try out and fine tune the evidence-based teaching approaches they're learning. The results of ACUE's approach have been impressive, and I'm glad Sova and ACUE are working together to deepen faculty engagement and ownership in the work of colleges and universities becoming truly student focused."

"We're honored to support the pathways movement with Sova as our partner," said Jonathan Gyurko, ACUE's president and co-founder. "They bring a wealth of insights as convener of the Guided Pathways Collaborative and from years of faculty engagement work—all of which will inform our new certificate."

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About Sova: Sova's mission is to accelerate the pace and improve the quality of complex problem solving in higher education and workforce development. Driven by a core commitment to advancing genuine socioeconomic mobility through education, we help higher education leaders seize opportunities and avoid pitfalls as they move from strategy to action, from solution to implementation, and from pilot to scaled intervention. Sova pursues its mission through distinctive approaches to change leadership, process improvement, and business planning.

About ACUE: The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) believes that all college students deserve an extraordinary education and that faculty members play a critical role in their success. In partnership with institutions of higher education nationwide, ACUE supports and credentials faculty members in the use of evidence-based teaching practices that drive student engagement, retention, and learning. Faculty members who complete ACUE courses earn certificates in effective college instruction endorsed by the American Council on Education. ACUE's Community of Professional Practice connects college educators from across the country through member forums, podcasts, and updates on the latest developments in the scholarship of teaching and learning. To learn more, visit www.acue.org.